



When Tom Dotterer entered CBA in the fall of 1949, he was following in the footsteps of big brother Henry, Tom was not the most academically motivated person but he did love the competition afforded him by interscholastic athletics. Throughout his high school career, Tom was fortunate to play alongside some of the famous names in CBA football history and was in the backfield with Chuck Zimmerman and Frank Cappelletti. A two year football letterman, Tom was the understudy to Cappelletti who was then a National Catholic All American. Although Tom may have started only one game in his high school career, he was selected by the Post Standard as an honorable mention all city football in 1952.

Tom also played basketball during his junior and senior years. As a senior he was selected a team captain by coach Don Blaich. Tom immediately proved his worth by scoring 14 pts vs. Vocational in the 1952 - 53 season opener. Unfortunately for Tom, that was more points than he scored in the rest of the season. In fact, if I have my story straight or at least how it is remembered 50 years later, Tom didn't finish that season with the team. It seems that he was honing his pitching skills one practice and happened to use the back of Coach Blaich's head as a target. Needless to say, Don encouraged the young infielder to take the rest of the season off and work on his baseball skills.



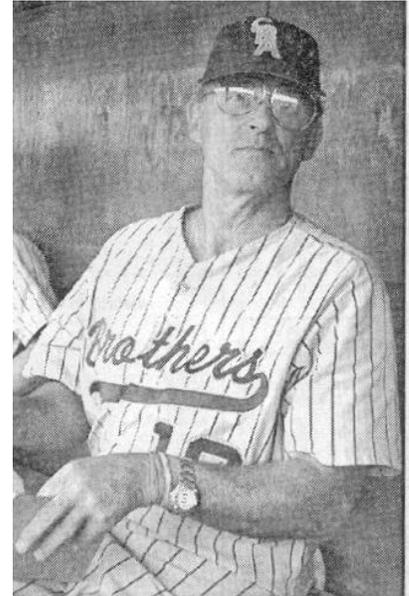
And that he did.

Tom played shortstop on the 1953 edition of the Brothers baseball team that featured ace pitchers Joe Rodriguez and Ed Donnelly. The team was very successful and cruised through the City league with relative ease. Led by Tommy, the team advanced to the City Parochial playoff game at McArthur Stadium. Unfortunately for the good guys, their all city catcher, Dick Capone broke his ankle in the City Championship game vs. Nottingham. Now I'm not sure why, but for some reason coach Brother B Louis didn't use back up catcher Ed Ferrante who was supposed to catch but rather the young Dutch Dotterer went behind the plate. That was June 9, 1953 a day that will live in infamy in the heart of Coach Dotterer. The Brothers lost that day, 2 - 1 and the first run was scored when Jerry Alletzhauer reached base on catchers interference and then got to third when the adrenaline controlled catcher sent his throw into center field allowing the go ahead run to reach third base.

Tom spent the summer after his graduation playing summer baseball for the Valley Legion team. He batted .440 that season while playing short and third and led team to the state finals. His great summer league

performance was noticed by the Cincinnati scouts. He was signed to a minor league contract in November of 1954 and stated his career with Duluth of the Northern League.

Tom had a great career in the minor leagues. Although never making it to the majors Tom spent nine years at different levels and towns. As a member of the Reds organization he was teammates with several of the big names of the day such as Tommy Helms, Tony Oliva and one of the biggest ever Pete Rose. He played in towns such as Fitzgerald and Savannah, Georgia, Fort Walton in Alabama and for the Paris Island Marine team. But in 1962, he stopped chasing the dream of playing in the big leagues and returned home to Syracuse to settle down. After stints of teaching phys ed and coaching in many of the areas' catholic elementary schools, he went back to work running his father's business, Salina Liquors and coached in the youth baseball leagues of Syracuse. In 1980 his alma mater called. CBA was looking for a varsity baseball coach and its search took them to North Salina Street. Then Athletic Director Gary Barnaba hired Tom to guide the diamond fortunes of the Brothers and the rest is history or actually has become part of folklore.



With most programs it takes a few years for a coach to put in his system and to adjust to his new position. In Tom's first few years at the helm this was the case. In his first four seasons his teams compiled a reasonable 26 and 32 record in the Central New York Cities league. But by 1984, his fifth season, his players had adjusted to his laissez faire style of coaching and began to flourish. The Brothers captured the 1984 CNYCL crown in the leagues last year of existence and looked forward into moving into the Onondaga High School League, one that was known for its stiff competition.

Now, I'm not sure what officially constitutes an athletic dynasty but let me list some accomplishments of this

program and see if you think we can use the D Word. Dotterer coached CBA baseball teams currently have a streak of winning TEN consecutive division championships and 12 in the last 14 years. Since 1990, the Brothers have also won eight Section III championships. Tom's teams have advanced to the State Championship game three times and in 1996 became the first team in Onondaga League and CBA history to bring home a state title. During his tenure so far Tom has amassed an overall record of 415 - 161. If those stats aren't worthy of being called a dynasty then I find it hard to imagine what would need to be done to be labeled as such.



The success CBA teams have enjoyed, though, do not tell the whole story of Tom Dotterer. His style of coaching is as impressive as his record. Tom is a players coach. He doesn't restrict or hinder his players, he empowers them. He encourages them to act on their own intuition so that they learn more about themselves and the game, and therefore take ownership of their mistakes and triumphs. It takes a special coach to allow his players such freedom and many of them don't realize just how lucky they are to have played for Coach Dotterer until long after their CBA careers have ended.

After the 1996 team won the state championship I went down to the dugout to congratulate Tom and the team on their success. Away from all the celebration, alone in the dugout there was Tom, performing his usual post game activity, picking up the helmets and putting the bats away. I finally got him to sit down and we discussed the game for a short while but his next comment I'm sure, would apply to how he would describe this evening. He simply said that it was yesterday's news and that there would be new challenges facing us the next day. Although I can't deny that each day we do have something new to learn, as far as I'm concerned, another term for yesterday's news is history. And no matter how we may try to ignore or discount it, it has been proven time and time again that we must respect it. Tom, by all that you have done for our baseball program and our school, you have become an important part of our history. Although we can never repay you for all that you have done for our student athletes, please accept this as a sign of our sincere appreciation for your hard work, dedication and love of CBA.